

REMARKS

Claims 1 to 31 are in the application, with Claims 1, 14, 28 and 31 being the independent claims. Claim 31 has been amended herein. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

As an initial matter, Applicants respectfully thank the Examiner for the indication in the Office Action that Claims 1 to 30 have been allowed.

In the Office Action, Claim 31 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 over the allegedly admitted prior art (AAPA) at paragraphs 10 and 11 of Applicants' own disclosure. In this regard, Applicants have amended Claim 31 herein to further clarify the claimed invention. The text of paragraphs 10 and 11 of Applicants' own disclosure is not seen to disclose or suggest the features of amended Claim 31, particularly with respect to the step of calculating thruster-off regions within the orbit transfer in which it is efficient to turn-off spacecraft thrusters, based on a comparison for each region of a computed thrust effectiveness value to a thrust effectiveness threshold value. Accordingly, amended independent Claim 31 is believed to be in allowable condition, and reconsideration and withdrawal of the foregoing claim rejection are respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Serial No.: 10/723,915

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Orange County office by telephone at (949) 851-0633. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address given below.

Respectfully submitted,

MCDERMOTT WILL & EMERY LLP

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. A. Duchene", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dennis A. Duchene

Registration No. 40,595

18191 Von Karman Ave., Suite 400
Irvine, CA 92612-7107
949.851.0633 DAD:wrij
Facsimile: 949.851.9348
Date: September 16, 2004

ORC 346042-1.070602.0253